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Dated: December 20, 2004

Signature:

(Raymond W. Augustin)

**EXPEDITED PROCEDURE**

Group Art Unit: 3738

Docket No.: SPINE 3.0-2144 DIV II

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Patent Application of:  
Lance Middleton

Application No.: 10/672,327

Filed: September 26, 2003

For: ARTIFICIAL INTERVERTEBRAL DISC

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:: Group Art Unit: 3738  
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:: Examiner: B. E. Snow  
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**AMENDMENT UNDER 37 CFR 1.116**

MS AF  
Commissioner for Patents  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Dear Sir:

In response to the Office Action dated October 13, 2004, finally rejecting claims 1-15, and 17-21, please amend the above-identified U.S. patent application as follows: